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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - APRIL 10

¶1. (U) The items contained in this report consist principally of spot information from various sources. This report is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

Security Situation

¶2. (SBU) The FARDC clashed with the FDLR in Katale (just south of Nyibiondo) earlier this week. One FARDC officer was badly wounded. There was no report of FDLR casualties.

¶3. (SBU) FARDC troops have now deployed to Tshvang (2,200), Hombo (3,000) and Kindu (2,630) in preparation for Operation Kimia II against the FDLR. While MONUC is committed to providing logistic support, the soldiers are often unpaid, and prey on local populations. The FARDC has reportedly provided all its soldiers with a food budget, but it is doubtful this will be sufficient to halt the abuses.

¶4. (SBU) The FARDC and MONUC have established a Joint Operations Center (JOC) in Bukavu. Colonel Delphin, who will be the FARDC commander for Operation Kimia II in South Kivu, reportedly arrived at the JOC on April 9.

¶5. (SBU) The Congolese National Police (PNC) has completed its deployment in former CNDP-controlled areas. The deployment is a key aspect of MONUC's stabilization program, but a European police trainer reports that PNC personnel often lack arms and food and are unsure of their mission and chain of command. The newly deployed officers are supposed to integrate with CNDP police, but the two sometimes maintain parallel structures.

¶6. (SBU) MONUC estimated FRPI strength along the Bunia to Boga road at 150-300. The FRPI has resorted to banditry, rendering the road unsafe. MONUC will support FARDC efforts to clear the road and establish state authority in the area. Banditry is also rampant on the Sake-Masisi road. It frequently closes because of landslides, but UNOPS is working to keep the road open.

¶7. (SBU) Humanitarian agencies continue to report a worsening situation in the area south of Lubero. Thousands of IDPs have been created as the FDLR moves back into the region, often carrying out reprisals against local residents.

¶8. (SBU) MONUC reports that approximately 3,000 IDPs have been located approximately 20 kilometers northwest of Dungu. The IDPs, which are fleeing from LRA bands in the region, are in dire need of food and medicine.

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